/117 cont./

628 tendency toward the independence of the next smaller parts acting on this plane and forming it -- namely, the villages.

These hostile relationships between the villages are external evidence of a centrifugal force in Waika culture seeking detach-
628 ment. The opposite tendency, the centripetal force toward bind-
574 ing the villages together, finds its expression in active intercourse
438 for trading and visiting. These trips, which are performed with such zeal that practically every second day there is some associa-tion with another village, from or to it, can be divided into sev-
431 eral groups, according to their purpose. First, trips purely for trade take place: each village prefers to produce or procure a certain article of the material culture so that it practically has a monopoly on it. One village supplies especially fine tobacco, another is favorably located in a place where much arrow-cane grows, a third produces pots because good clay is present in the vicinity, another is the supplier of hunting dogs for the neighbor-hood, and the village closest to us naturally barters primarily with European ironware. This formation of centers for specific goods naturally favored the development of commercial traffic; the trading itself is carried out over very long periods and thus resembles a gift-exchange behind which there is a certain amount
437 of compulsion. When one knows that the partner has more objects of a kind than he justifiably needs for himself, it is requested very urgently, and the one so entreated may not refuse, if he does not want to risk enmity and war -- he can, of course, get his revenge
[182] in his own way the next time. This system successfully prevents
556 any accumulation of capital; no Waika possesses noticeably more
565 than his neighbor; there are no social distinctions; and consequently no vertical classes.

628 Besides trade, the transmission of news, which proceeds in the
594 form of a /118/ ceremonial conversational-singing and not in
[203] simple dialogue, is also one purpose of such trips, as are wife-
[533] seeking and courting in other villages. As a rule all these trips
[584] are made by a group of men or young people who are guests for one or at most two nights in the strange village and then, after the trading has been done, oddly enough not until the last minute

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Branco river in Brazil. They considered an agricultural life a peasant's life, and a dull one at that, with no possible appeal to the imagination. There were a few palavers about it, but it is well-known that among primitive peoples the old are listened to least: wisdom favours the youths and the boys, who have their whole lives in front of them—not behind them like a stream flowing away. The young men prevailed, and burned the forest. The first big hut was built according to Manuera's ideas, and served as a pattern for all the Shirians when they came to build.

So we too arrived at this 'big hut', which Manuera showed us with a pride that was scarcely justified, and here too the Shirians fled away into the woods, much to the amusement of our guides. We could hear them there, uttering their guttural cries of terror and wonderment.

Inside the hut there was no one, with the exception of two old folk stretched out in their liana hammocks. They didn't stir: it was as if they didn't even see us. One of them was a woman whose body was reddened nearly all over with *chute*—a skin disease frequent among the Indians. A macaw, scared by the sight of our beards, set up a howl on his perch and started biting through the cord which attached him to it. Manuera went off into the woods, calling the others, and the thick green swallowed him up for a good hour. We were rather afraid he would want to stop here for the night, for our stomachs were turning at the filth around us, but we had misjudged our man: Manuera was now engaged in more important business and had no desire for more than a brief, benevolent survey of his kinsfolk. We very soon got back to the boat and at last were able to take deep breaths of the fresh river and forest air.

Manuera told us that the Shirians had not been really so scared by our arrival. Indeed, they had been expecting us. But they couldn't quite pluck up the courage to look close. Our stature, our beards, our clothes and our guns, in the eyes of primitive people, turned us into supermen—dread figures, terrifying as monsters and above all, essentially evil.

The news that we were on the way had been bruited abroad by the party we had met at the Mené pass—and *à propos* of this, we learned from Manuera that the spider-child had died soon afterwards, somewhere on the Sabera. It was a relief to hear this, even if the poor little monstrosity's death had been caused by the sight of us, as the Shirians thought. Manuera's gestures became wild, and his speech difficult to follow, as he tried to explain their attitude.

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we found traces of a big encampment: here were the forked branches with the rudimentary hammocks still slung from them. There had been fires here too, but the ashes were now cold. Bones and scraps of all sorts were scattered everywhere and in the centre of the area there was shining the great armoured back of an armadillo. This aroused everyone's curiosity, not least the Samatari's. They were probably thinking of the sumptuous banquet which this carcass had afforded, and we were very glad to see that the pangs of hunger were at that moment very real and very urgent for them, too.

The fact that the fires were cold convinced our captors that it would be a good idea to set up their own camp: there would be no likelihood tonight of catching up with the tribe that had passed this way. Things went so quietly that at times we forgot that we were prisoners: automatically we looked on the Samatari as our friends and guides, just like the Guaycs Indians. But the illusion was brief: that evening we ate nothing, while our sharp-eyed hosts tucked into a mound of grubs they had collected *en route*. Then they belched their way to their hammocks, from which the odours of their further digestion wafted down.

I thought of Sempronio who had had nothing to eat either, and wondered what had happened to his pan-ful of agouti entrails which had been left burning the night before when we were attacked. It was really the thought of all those tit-bits being burnt and wasted which stopped me going to sleep.

Next day, a little before noon, while I was watching Enrico plodding along with set jaw, sweating copiously (I might have been looking at my own image in a glass) we heard a distant howling that sounded like monkeys. No one said anything. Our march continued until the howls became more distinct; and then, confused as we were, it dawned on us that the noise was being made by men and not by monkeys at all. Still we did not stop. The sounds were still coming from a long way off. Then, rounding the bend of a stream, we sensed that it was suddenly quite near: it was as if some monster were just ahead of us, peering at us through the trees on our immediate horizon. The howling went on. It was now close at hand, coming from ground level and from the trees—a sharp, disorderly confusion of noise.

The Samatari had come to a sudden standstill. They were discussing something among themselves. Every time this happened, our alarm quickened: some dark fate was surely being prepared for us. We were all in perfect Indian file, with Enrico and I in the middle, with the Guaycas behind us and three or

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123 203 our of the Samatari bringing up the rear. Without warning, the Indians let out a powerful howl, pitched at the very top of the register, which silenced all the background forest noises for good and all. They kept up this ululation as they marched on, like a steamer coming into port, and we found ourselves joining in without realising it, like men shouting in open country at night to keep their spirits up.

On the other side of the stream the Indians fell silent for a moment, as if intent on listening. Then they exploded with an exactly similar performance—this time in strict unison and on the same high note. Both parties were now howling together—in alarm, in friendship, in hate, in sorrow, in some mixture of human feelings which, for good or ill, must lift up a voice in protest against the hostile world that lay in silence all around. And this howling in unison that Enrico and I, lost in the forest, shared with a pack of savages of various and uncertain temper, filled us with emotions of unbearable intensity.

I remember that when we talked about it later on, when the danger was a thing of the past and only an absurd nostalgia remained, we agreed that this had been the most emotional moment of our lives—or at any rate, the moment in which our emotions had erupted more violently and more irresistibly than at any other time, to find expression in that universal howl.

123 It would be hard to describe the scene which followed when we came to that encampment, or to find words which would do it justice.

Ape-men came down from the trees and ran towards the c p centre, crowding together there in a wild tumult which immediately s d forward in a threatening advance towards us. Behind came the women carry g supplies of arrows and out-howling the men. When we appeared from behind the grimy backs of our captors the howling broke off momentarily and then began again in an altered tone, this time a medley of a hundred different individual yells.

When our column stopped we found ourselves surrounded by a mass of shrieking, dirty, malodorous humanity that leapt on us from all sides. My trousers were again stripped off me, from the rear. Once more they disappeared into a forest of legs, while the more persistent among the crowd first touched me tentatively as if I might bite, and then grew bolder and started putting their hands on me, rather as if I were a fish that was trying to dart away. My principal attraction for them lay in my beard and the hairs on my chest. A few—the lucky ones who managed to press to the front of this surging tide—went

/470 cont./

512 [276] men. Some of them sing in singsong voices to influence the spirits, while others wander around like drunks. A few do not take any "yopo" at all. These "yopo" cantilenas generally last for about two hours.

In the afternoon a few more women, including some of those who were in the conuco in the morning, go out to look for /471/ firewood. Other women devote themselves to spinning cotton. At about 5:00 in the afternoon the women and girls go down to the stream to fill all the gourds or totumas.

[824] [721] [706] A little before dark, the evening meal ends. Palm leaves are placed so as to obstruct the entrances to the paths against the coming of wandering spirits and also to make greater difficulty for any attacking band coming from an enemy settlement. Every house lights its own fire and prepares for the night. At about 7:00 P.M. all is silent.

[535] [533] [203] [594] But if the moon comes out, the women and children may continue singing and dancing until well into the night. Or when there are visitors who arrived during the day, there might be crooning of news throughout the night, until the coming of the sun puts an end to it.

Names

553 551 Every individual receives a name given by his parents. Until the child receives a name, he is called by any of the standard names that are applied to small children. The use of these standard names is usually prolonged for several years after the boy or girl has received his own name. It is taboo to give one person the name of another. There are no homonyms or namesakes. An individual might be given the name of a plant, an animal, an action, an aspect, or sometimes simply be given some name invented by his parents.

551 Nicknames are given freely. Some have a root, others do not. Usually they are very descriptive and frequently very biting.

It is not good manners to call a person by his name, if it can be avoided. It is always better to say: the older brother of so-and-so, the older sister of so-and-so, the husband of so-and-so, the father of so-and-so, or the mother of so-and-so.

one real headman, Kɛobɨwɨ. Thus, Paruriwɨ had to separate from Kɛobɨwɨ's group to achieve a status equal to that of Kɛobɨwɨ.

In July 1965 Kɛobɨwɨ sent his brother-in-law, Kumaawɨ, to Patanowɨ-tedi to inform them that his group did not intend to raid the Patanowɨ-tedi in the future. When Kumaawɨ returned to Bisaasi-tedi, he brought two older people with him, demonstrating that the Patanowɨ-tedi trusted Kɛobɨwɨ and were anxious to promote good relations with his group. The older couple brought the message that three young men from Patanowɨ-tedi were coming on a visit soon. Three days later the young men, Kɛrokoiwɨ, Maaiwɨ, and Koiyaiwɨ, arrived. Paruriwɨ's group was visiting the Widokaiya-tedi, and when word reached him that a delegation of Patanowɨ-tedi had arrived at Bisaasi-tedi to visit Kɛobɨwɨ, he and a group of men from Monou-tedi immediately returned to Bisaasi-tedi, intending to murder the three visitors. Kɛobɨwɨ, however, warned Paruriwɨ and the Monou-tedi that should they attempt to harm the visitors, he and his followers would defend them with force. A crisis developed out of this situation, and for a whole day Paruriwɨ and his Monou-tedi supporters debated the wisdom of their plan. Finally, Paruriwɨ decided to desist from the murders and even participated in a news chant with one of the Patanowɨ-tedi--the father of his youngest wife. This emphasized Kɛobɨwɨ's influence as a leader, and Paruriwɨ decided to move away from Kɛobɨwɨ's group after this incident. The Monou-tedi who were to participate in the murder of the three

begun cultivating an alliance with a third Shamatari group, one that was related to the two that conducted the massacre in 1950. The new Shamatari group, Paruriawá-teri (see map, Fig. 2-8), was at war with the Iwahikoroba-teri, but on friendly terms with the Mõwaraoba-teri. Kaobawã's group persuaded their new Shamatari allies to invite the Mõwaraoba-teri to a feast and planned a massacre similar to that of 1950, but with the tables reversed: Kaobawã's group would lie in ambush, while the Paruriawá-teri attacked the guests within the village. The Mõwaraoba-teri were being ravished by a malaria epidemic at this time, and only a handful of them actually came to the feast: The others were too sick to travel. With the aid of their newly found allies, Kaobawã's group managed to kill three of the five men and abducted four of their women. The other two visitors escaped to tell of the treachery. This revenge feast was only considered to be partially successful, and Kaobawã's group was not satisfied with the outcome. Their Shamatari allies, Paruriawá-teri, were obliged to abandon their site to avoid the revenge raids, splitting into two groups in the process: Mõmariõwei-teri and Reyaboõwei-teri, both continuing to remain friendly to Kaobawã's group.

In early 1965, just a few months after I began my fieldwork, Kaobawã and his supporters left to visit Reyaboõwei-teri, one of the two Shamatari allies, hoping to conduct another treacherous feast for the Mõwaraoba-teri. They left a few men behind to protect the women and children. The men were gone almost two weeks. All during this time, those who remained behind flocked to my mud hut at dawn and remained in it the whole day, not permitting me to leave. Every hour or so they asked to see my shotgun. I soon discovered that they were frightened and suspected that the Widokaiya-teri were going to raid them to abduct women, for they knew of the plot. My hut lay on the path most likely to be taken by Widokaiya-teri raiders, and the few remaining men stood guard next to my door, hoping to intercept the raiders should they attack at night.

I, unknowingly, guarded the women and children by day with my shotgun, while the men did the same at night with their own weapons. This incident indelibly underscores the almost complete lack of trust between allies; the members of Kaobawã's group expected a raid from their friends and allies rather than from their enemies!

About ten days after the men had left, six visitors from another allied village passed through Upper Biaasi-teri hoping to trade. It was obvious to them that the men were away and that the women were frightened. They carried word of the situation up the Orinoco River to their own allies, one of which was the Mahekodo-teri.

The evening before the men returned from their trip, one of the Salesian Missionaries, Padre Luiz Cocco, visited me, having traveled up the Orinoco River by dark—a dangerous undertaking at that time of the year. Padre Cocco had just received word by short-wave radio from the mission at Mahekodo-teri that a large party of men had left for Biaasi-teri intent on capturing women. They had learned of the poorly guarded women from the six visitors and were determined to take advantage of the situation.

My house was full of women and children at dawn the following day, and the raiders were probably en route. I was in a difficult situation. On the one hand, if I told the Indians of the rumor, it would have been sufficient cause to start a war between Kaobawã's group and the Mahekodo-teri. This would have been most unfortunate if the story proved to be false. On the other hand, I dared not remain silent. If raiders were indeed coming, they would probably kill the defenders to capture the women. Fortunately, Kaobawã and the men returned early in the afternoon, and I was able to remain

neutral. The treacherous feast for their Shamatari enemies proved to be unsuccessful. The intended victims had accepted the invitation, but were informed of the plot just before they arrived. One of the Reyaboböwei-teri who had close kinsmen among them had misgivings about the matter and warned them.

Late in the afternoon it was learned that the Mahekodo-teri were, in fact, in the vicinity of the village, allegedly on a "camping trip." Kaobawä, of course, suspected their story, but to demonstrate his friendship he invited them to be his guests at a feast. As he and his men had been away for nearly two weeks, there was an abundance of food in their gardens and they could easily afford to entertain the Mahekodo-teri and their traveling companions, the Boreta-teri. Together, the guests numbered about 100—after they fetched their women and children.

This sets the stage for the feast in the kind of context that makes it more intelligible: The specific historical relationships between the participants and the nature of their mutual mistrust. Now I will give the details of the events that followed.

The Feast

Perhaps because he suspected the Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri of intimidation, Kaobawä also invited the Karobi-teri to attend the feast. They are a small but dependable ally and had themselves separated from the Mahekodo-teri many years ago. This established a balance of power at the projected feast should any trouble arise, for the combination of both Boreta-teri and Mahekoglo-teri was of sufficient strength to worry any host. With the aid of the Karobi-teri, Kaobawä's group was more of a match for the visitors.

The feast started out on a sour note. It is the custom of the Yanomamö visitors to arrive only after an invitation from their hosts, sent by messenger on the day of the feast. The Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri, however, arrogantly arrived nearly a week before Kaobawä's group was prepared to receive them and set up a large, temporary camp a short distance from the village. They were guests and could legitimately demand to be fed. Because of this, Kaobawä and his covillagers were under obligation to feed them, some hundred or so people, and took them to the gardens to supply them with enough plantains to last a week. Kaobawä was a little disturbed that they would be so impolite as to arrive uninvited, but took the situation quite philosophically. After all, they had fed his group for the better part of a year.

He and several other men cut a large quantity of plantains, which were hung in his house and allowed to ripen for a week, to be boiled into *date*, a thick, sweet soup, on the day of the feast. That afternoon Kaobawä and a few of the older men commissioned a hunting party comprised of young men, several of whom were Kaobawä's brothers, whose responsibility would be to obtain a large quantity of fresh meat to give to the visitors on the day after the feast. Most of them were reluctant to go, as their feet were still sore from the trip to the Shamatari village. A few of them claimed to be sick and managed to escape recruitment into the hunting party in this way. This hunt, with the hanging of the plantains in the headman's house, initiated the feast. The excitement that usually attends a feast began at this time.

That evening the young men danced and sang in the village, an institution called [illegible], thereby insuring themselves with luck on the hunt. (The Yanomamö also

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 107]